**Economic Development Committee**



Butterick Building, 1 Park Street, Room 205

**ZOOM Meeting due to COVID-19**

August 24, 2020

Time 8:30 AM

**Minutes**

**Present:** Chairman James Patacchiola, Maureen Cranson, Keith Cordial, Paul Cathcart,, Ross Perry (Staff), Domenica Tatasciore (Staff)

**Absent:**  Michael Pineo and Lex Thomas (Consultant)

**Non-Members present:**  Tori Luksha, Potential Future Plans for The Sterling Inn

**Open Meeting:** Chairman Patacchiola opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

**Approval of Past Minutes:** Maureen Cranson made the motion to accept the minutes of the February 24, 2020 meeting. Seconded by Keith Cordial. The motion was unanimously accepted. Maureen Cranson made the motion to accept the minutes of the July 13, 2020 meeting. Seconded by Keith Cordial. The motion was unanimously accepted.

**1835 Building Project**

Maureen Cranson stated that the 1835 Building is almost ready to open. She reiterated that the downstairs carpet needs replacing and asked that the committee consider using EDC money to replace it. The estimated cost is $10,000.00. Paul Cathcart said that the 1835 Building is a good investment and Chairman Jim Patacchiola agreed. Mr. Patacchiola cited, “We have spent EDC money on other developments (ex. Studies)” and asked, “If we do this, will we have an incubator?” Ms. Cranson replied that it would not be just for that but also for perhaps the Recreation Department, or renting rooms to the Senior Center for their activities, artists, small concerts. And there would be still room for an Incubator.

Keith Cordial shared his concerns about the condition of the flooring under the carpet and asked if sub-flooring would be included in the bids? Ms. Cranson said it has already been considered. Mr. Patacchiola asked if we will know by the next EDC meeting how much the cost will be. Ms. Cranson said yes.

**MOTION:** Chairman James Patacchiola made a motion that the EDC pay to replace the downstairs carpet of the 1835 House for under $10,000.00. Paul Cathcart seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously accepted.

**Discussions regarding Lex Thomas:**  Maureen Cranson asked what the EDC would like Lex Thomas to do for it. Paul Cathcart suggested that the members each send a list of ideas to Chairman Jim before the next meeting.

**MOTION:** Maureen Cranson made a motion that the EDC members send a list of ideas for what the EDC envisions LexThomas performing for it.

**ACTION ITEM:** Members of the EDC will submit a list of ideas that they would like to request that Lex Thomas perform for the committee.

**Nuisance Properties**

Paul Cathcart asked that this committee request a report from Sarah Culgin of the Nuisance Properties.

**ACTION ITEM:** Chairman Patacchiola will email Ms. Culgin before the next EDC meeting requesting her latest report.

**Town Planner Update**

Domenica Tatasciore voiced her concerns about 3 items that had been supported but deferred at a previous Town Meeting: Mixed Use, the Aquifer and the Earth Removal by-law replacing the current by-law, She requested that members of the EDC attend the September 9, 2020 ZOOM meeting and that they write a formal letter in support of passing these articles.

**MOTION:** Maureen Cranson made a motion that the EDC write a formal letter in support. James Patacchiola seconded. The motion was unanimously accepted. Chairman Patacchiola will work with Domenica Tatasciore.

**ACTION ITEM:** EDC to attend the September 9, 2020 ZOOM meeting and also write a formal letter showing support of the 3 articles.

**The Sterling Inn**

Tori Luksha gave the EDC an extensive presentation of her visualization of the future of the Sterling Inn. Members of the EDC reiterated that the property is tied up in court and nothing can be done until it clears. They also said that investing may be a challenge and that she is not the only party interested in the property. All of the members were impressed with her presentation and Chairman Patacchiola said the EDC is in favor of her concepts and ideas but that the committee can offer no commitment. Mr. Cathcart rquested of Ms. Luksha that she email her presentation to the EDC chairman and he will forward it to the members. He also asked her that she update the EDC on her progress or lack thereof.

**MOTION:** Chairman Patacchiola made a motion that the EDC votes to support Tori Luksha’s presentation for the Sterling Inn. Keith Cordial seconded. Paul Cathcart voted Yes, Maureen voted No.

**Town Center Revitalization**

Ross Perry has sent emails to Verizon to move forward but has received no response so far. Paul Cathcart suggested that he might raise the issue to the Governor’s office. Mr. Perry will draft a letter and include Governor Baker in the distribution list.

ACTION ITEM: Ross Perry to write a letter to Verizon and include Governor Baker in the distribution list.

**Town Beach Drainage Update**

Ross Perry reported that the DPW is maintaining the Town Beach area: grading, removing litter, painting buildings, etc. He mentioned that the town has money for an Engineering project.

**Announcements**

Chairman Patacchiola announced that Dick Maki sent a nice closure letter. He mentioned the concept of Business Recognition and Awards. Paul Cathcart agreed that businesses like having those in their lobbies.

**MOTION:** Maureen Cranson made a motion that the EDC set up a Business Recognition and Awards Program. Keith Cordial seconded. The motion was unanimously accepted. Keith Cordial was nominated to head the Program.

ACTION ITEM: Keith Cordial to head the Business Recognition and Awards Program and to start the program immediately.

Chairman Patacchiola announced that there are 2 positions to be filled on this Economic Development Committee and asked if anyone knew of anyone who is interested. Ms. Cranson will send him names of interested people,

ACTION ITEM: Maureen Cranson will send names of people who are interested in being on the EDC to Chairman Patacchiola,

**Adjournment of Meeting**

Maureen Cranson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chairman Patacchiola seconded. All were in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a. m.

The next EDC meeting date is September 28, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara O’Connor, Recorder